

December 9, 2008

The Honorable Phil Andrews, President
Montgomery County Council
100 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Dear Council President Andrews:

It is my understanding that the Montgomery County Council and the County Executive are deliberating Bill 35-08 Motor Vehicles and Traffic – Miscellaneous Provisions – Funding for Public Safety Programs introduced by Councilmembers Andrews, Knapp, Ervin, Trachtenberg, and Floreen. The City of Rockville would like to take this opportunity to share comments on how we operate our speed camera program and spend the revenues.

The City of Rockville has been operating a speed camera program since May 2007. In the year and a half the program has been operating, we have seen the tremendous benefits it brings to our residents. On the three roadways that the City has fixed-pole cameras (6), and the other thirteen (13) roadways where Rockville deploys its mobile speed vans, speeding and accidents have been reduced significantly.

The number of accidents at sixteen speed camera locations in Rockville during the period of May 1, 2006 to May 1, 2007 decreased from 28 to 17. The average speed at the fixed pole site on Baltimore Road during the period of August 2007 to April 2008 decreased from 27.99 miles per hour (mph) to 23.64 mph, which is a reduction of 4.35 mph. The average speed at our fixed pole location on Wootton Parkway during the period of August 2007 to April 2008 was reduced from 26.20 mph to 22.83 mph, which is reduction of 3.37 miles per hour.

The primary purpose of our program is to improve pedestrian safety in areas where excessive speeding problems exist. Rockville has followed a strict interpretation of the enabling legislation (HB443) to operate speed camera programs, and believes that any revenues generated are to be used only for pedestrian safety purposes. The City has carefully documented all of the revenues generated from the program, and allocated the funding exclusively for pedestrian safety improvements.

In the FY09 adopted budget, speed camera revenues fund three Capital Improvements Program (CIP) projects, 6.0 positions (2.5 were new for FY09), and a pedestrian safety consultant study. The information that follows describes the budgeted funds in further detail.

The CIP projects include:

- Pedestrian/Bikeway System Improvements - \$1,010,000. This project includes the installation of security lighting along the Sister City Friendship Bridge and construction of a pedestrian pathway from Crofton Hill Lane Road to Darnestown Road.

- Pedestrian Safety - \$320,000. This project includes the construction of sidewalks and bicycle pathways, pedestrian traffic control devices, and other related items.
- Street Lighting Improvements- \$100,000. This project entails the installation of additional streetlights in East Rockville through coordination with Pepco.

The new positions are as follows:

- 0.5 Civil Engineer II to design sidewalks and other pedestrian safety measures.
- 2.0 Police Officers assigned to traffic enforcement to ensure pedestrian safety.

In addition to the above referenced items, there is \$50,000 in the operating budget to assess the City of Rockville's inventory and condition of sidewalks, crosswalks, and curb cuts.

Rockville will continue to use the speed camera revenues to support pedestrian safety initiatives only. This is the best use of the funds for our City, and is in accordance with the intent of the State legislation.

We thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this subject. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you should have any questions about how Rockville accounts for and expends its speed camera funds.

Sincerely,

Susan R. Hoffmann
Mayor

cc: Rockville City Council
Montgomery County Council
Scott Ullery, City Manager
Catherine Tuck Parrish, Deputy City Manager
Terry Treschuk, Chief of Police